

"COME OUT OF THE KITCHEN" SOLVES A DOMESTIC PROBLEM



ACT I—OLIVIA:—"NO MA'AM 'TIS A SIN WE SHUD ALL PRAY FOR STRENGTH TO AVOID" Left to Right—BRUCE MERRAE, MARGUERITE ST. JOHN, WM. H. SAMS, RUTH CHATTERTON, ALICE LINDALE and WALTER CONNOLLY.

Best Way to Keep a Cook Is to Marry Her, the Play Shows--In This Case the Solution Was Particularly Attractive, as the Cook Proved to Be a Daughter of One of the F. F. V.'s in Disguise

In "Come Out of the Kitchen" Olivia Dainierfield (Ruth Chatterton) plays at being the cook when Bruce Crane, a wealthy young bachelor from the North, rents her ancestral home in Virginia for the hunting season. Of course complications arise from her disguise and Crane naturally falls in love with her, not knowing that she is a child of the oldest of the original F. F. V.'s. There are many amusing scenes, two of which are given below.

From the first act.

[Olivia enters the drawing room, her charms in no way diminished by her kitchen garb.]

MRS. FALKENER [sitting up convulsively and leveling a long stare at Olivia]—You are the cook?

Olivia [in her best brogue]—Faith, then, I am, ma'am.

Mrs. F.—Bless my soul!

Corla Falkener [unconsciously draws nearer and Solon Tucker, Crane's attorney and guest, approaches also, clearing his throat somewhat loudly. Randolph Weeks, agent of the Dainierfields, is clearly nervous.]

Mrs. F.—And what is your name?

[Olivia hesitates.] I say, what is your name?

[Weeks comes to the rescue and he and Olivia speak together.]

Olivia—Jane.

Mrs. F.—There seems to be a difference of opinion.

Olivia [in a dovetail voice]—My name is Jane Ellen, ma'am.

Mrs. F.—Ah, I suppose you have references?

Weeks [hastily interposing]—Oh, the very best, I assure you.

Mrs. F.—From the Crossett-Billingtons, Mrs. Falkener, but unfortunately I have left them at my office, tomorrow, if you wish.

Olivia [taking a paper from her apron pocket and timidly handing it to Mrs. F.]—Here's me character, ma'am.

[Tucker takes it from Olivia and hands it to Mrs. Falkener.]

Mrs. F. [holding it out at arm's length and reading it]—To whom it may concern: This is to certify that I recommend the bearer, Jane Dainierfield, as a reliable girl and a competent cook. I have known her since her birth. She is leaving me for reasons of her own. But she is the best cook I have ever employed. Olivia Dainierfield. Ahem! It is a flattering testimonial. And who is Olivia Dainierfield? Mrs. Dainierfield, I suppose? [Hands the paper back to Tucker, who hands it to Olivia.]

Weeks—Er—no—no, Mr. and Mrs. Dainierfield are in Europe, I believe.

Mrs. F.—Your friends travel a good deal, don't they?

Weeks—Miss Olivia Dainierfield is one of the daughters.

Mrs. F.—Oh! [To Olivia:] And may I ask what were these "reasons of your own," my girl?

Olivia—Excuse me, ma'am.

Mrs. F.—Why did you leave Miss Dainierfield's service?

Olivia—Must I be affixed tellin' ye that, ma'am?

Mrs. F.—I think so.

Olivia—Faith, then, I couldn't stand the woman any longer. I was tired of seein' her around the place.

Mrs. F.—Indeed! My girl, let me see your hands. [Olivia approaches and holds out her hands for inspection. Mrs. F. stares at them.] Humph!

Manicured! So you couldn't stand seeing her around any longer, eh?

Olivia—Indeed, ma'am, I could not, then. Sure she was wan av them meddlin' females always pokin' her nose into things was none av her business.

Mrs. F. [winces slightly]—Ahem! And you went from her to the Crossett-Billingtons?

Olivia—Who, ma'am?

Mrs. F.—Was that the name, Mr. Weeks?

Weeks [hastily]—Yes, yes, from the Dainierfields to the Crossett-Billingtons; didn't you, Jane Ellen?

Olivia—Maybe I did, sor. I could never be gettin' that name straight in me head.

Mrs. F. [bluntly]—My girl, have you ever been married?

Olivia—God forbid, ma'am.

Mrs. F. [not heeding her]—Or engaged?

Olivia—Faith, ma'am, has that same anything to do with me cookin'?

Mrs. F.—Jane Ellen, don't be impertinent.

Olivia—No, ma'am. 'Tis a sin we shud all pray for strength to avoid.

Mrs. F.—Answer my question. Have you ever been engaged?

Weeks—If you'll excuse me, Mrs. Falkener, for saying so, I really—

Mrs. F.—Kindly do not interfere, Mr. Weeks.

Olivia—Oh, ma'am, 'tis not that I've anything to conceal. I was engaged wanst—Pat Conlon his name was—

—a fine broth av a boy as ever came out av Ireland. We was to have married last June, only, d'ye see, there was a quarrel an' I—just can't bear to think av it—every time me mind gets runnin' on it it just seems like—

[She pulls out a handkerchief and begins to sob quietly. The men all rather sublimely to comfort her.]

Olivia—Oh, Jane Ellen, please, please don't cry. Nobody wants to hurt your feelings.

Tucker—Look here, my girl, don't do that!

[Olivia murmurs inarticulately through her sobs.]

Mrs. F.—Well, really, I've had enough of this!

Crane [rather stiffly]—My dear Mrs. Falkener, I think—perhaps we all have—

—for the present.

Mrs. F. [angrily]—Oh, well, come. I think I'll say good night. [She goes out in high dudgeon.]

Crane—See here, Jane Ellen, you mustn't cry. Mother didn't mean to hurt you. [A fresh burst of quiet sobbing comes from the handkerchief.] Oh, well, I suppose I'd better go too. Good night. [Exit.]

Tucker—I'm quite sure my sister did not mean to be unkind. There, now—there, there.

Mrs. Falkener reappears at the door, saying imperatively—Solon!

Tucker—Yes, my dear!

Mrs. F.—I wish to speak with you—at once! [Exit.]

Tucker—Oh—oh—certainly—certainly—of course. [He reluctantly he goes out. Crane and Olivia are left alone.]

Crane—Now see here, Jane Ellen, please don't cry—please—just—just as a favor to me. Mrs. Falkener has gone. Olivia—Come, has she? [Suddenly showing a face quite innocent of tears, rather roughly in fact.] Faith, I'm feelin' better already.

Crane—Sure, what in the name—

Olivia—Sure, then, I suppose herself 'ud 'a been askin' me was me half all me own next—or was me gr in father

a drinkin' man—an' what was me favorite flower?

Crane—Well, God bless you for the aim!

Olivia—Faith, an' I hope He will, sor. Was there anything else, sor?

Crane—No—o.

Olivia—Yes, sor. [Going.]

Crane [hastily]—I mean yes—yes!

Olivia—Yes, sor.

Crane—Now, Jane Ellen, just one thing, I should like you to feel perfectly satisfied with your position here.

Olivia—Faith, sor, 'tis movin' that's bound to.

Crane—So if there's anything I can do to make you feel—er—happier I want you to promise you'll let me know.

Olivia—Anything, sor?

Crane—Yes, anything at all—anything.

Olivia—Yes, sor.

Crane—I mean—don't send the butler, come to me—just—just yourself—personally. And tell me, will you?

Olivia—Sure an' I might.

Crane—No, but will you?

Olivia—Indeed, yes, sor.

Crane—That's fine. Now—now—I'm sure we shall get on splendidly together. I and I. Shalln't we?

Olivia—Faith, that's as may be, sor, but we might.

Crane—Might! What do you mean by that?

Olivia—Sure, an' ye never can tell.

Crane—Eh?

Olivia—Sure, sor, we must always be hopin' for the best. But we might, sor, ay, we might. Thank ye, sor. [Going up to the door.]

Crane—Jane Ellen—

Olivia—Yes, sor?

Crane—About breakfast—I—I shall want some breakfast.

Olivia—Not till the mornin'—I suppose, sor?

Crane—Yes—yes—certainly, in the mornin'.

Olivia—Some fruit, coffee, toast an' eggs, sor?

Crane—Yes, of course, eggs—eggs.

Olivia—About three minutes, sor?

Crane—Yes—three minutes, yes.

Olivia—An' he like a bit av bacon, sor?

Crane—Yes, yes, exactly.

Olivia—Just broiled to a crisp, sor?

Crane—Excellent! Splendid!

Olivia—Very good, sor, an' ye said the eggs two minutes, sor?

Crane—Yes—yes—er—No—no—three minutes.

Olivia—Very good, sor; but ye can just as easy have them ten minutes as three. The water does the bilin', of me, sor. Good night to you, sor. [Exit.]

Crane—Good night, Jane Ellen.

Olivia [outside]—Good night an' the top of the mornin' to ye.

Crane—Well, God bless my soul!

From the Third Act. Jane, of course, is Olivia in the role of the cook.

Crane—How is the soup, Tucker?

Tucker—Excellent, Burton, excellent.

[Jane stands, tray in hand, with back to the screen.]

Weeks—Just nice. Just nice.

Crane—And not too hot?

[Jane removes the soup plates, going to Weeks first, then to Lefferts second.]

Lefferts—Yes, sir. [Sees Jane, who now leaves room.] By jove, I think that must be the face that launched a thousand ships.

Tucker—No, it's the cook—and you've seen her before too.

Lefferts—Oh, yes; oh, yes; very, very lovely little person, don't you think so?

Tucker—I confess I have not been able to take much interest in the personal appearance of servants.

Crane—Really, Tucker?

Lefferts—I say beauty is beauty wherever you find it. [Jane brings in plate of corn bread and returns to pantry.]

Tucker—Such a preoccupation with beauty has always struck me as decadent.

Lefferts—What, exactly, Mr. Tucker, is your definition of decadent?

Tucker—Decadent—is—decadent is

—it is simple enough, I think—decadent is—I shall trouble you for the definition.

Lefferts—A very comprehensive definition.

Tucker—During a long and varied experience at the bar—

Lefferts—Anyhow, the soup was delicious.

[Jane enters with the roast chicken on a platter and places it before Crane.]

Crane—Mr. Lefferts has been complimenting your soup, Jane Ellen.

Jane—Thank you, sor.

Weeks—Look here, Mr. Crane, what I should like to ask is, what has become of Smithfield?

Lefferts—Smithfield is indisposed.

Weeks—You mean he is sick?

Crane—No, no, no, I am sick. Sick of him. [Tucker laughs and guffaws with his mouth full. Crane continues.]

He has discharged him, also the boy Burton [Charles Dainierfield] and the housemaid, Araminta [Olivia's sister Elizabeth].

Weeks—What?

Crane—Yes, Mr. Weeks.

Weeks—You mean—er—er—you mean to tell me that you and Mr. Tucker and the cook are alone in this house?

Crane—I regret to say that Mr. Tucker also leaves me this evening.

Weeks—But—but—but—

Crane—Not now, Mr. Weeks; a little later. After dinner. For the present let's enjoy ourselves.

Weeks—Yes, yes, yes. Will you please help me to some butter?

Weeks—Certainly, by all means. But what I should like to ask you, you can't mean to tell me to—

Crane—Why, I won't trouble you with my particular plans. My experience, Mr. Weeks, has been that nobody cares anything about anybody's trifling little plans. They are small, domestic complications.

Lefferts—Oh, come, now; I'm not so sure. It strikes me Mr. Weeks is very much interested. Aren't you?

Weeks [stammering, but determined]—Yes, yes, I am—extremely, sincerely. You see, I know what would be said in a community like this—what would be thought. You—

Crane—I don't exactly. What is more, what people think is a matter of small consequence to me.

Weeks—Yes, as a rule, of course, but in this case I'm sure you'd agree with me if I could only—

[Jane comes in with vegetables and serves Lefferts.]

Crane—Doubtless, doubtless. What is it exactly that you mean? [Weeks casts an agonized glance at Jane, but remains speechless.]

Lefferts—It's perfectly clear, Mr. Weeks means that in such a small community as this if a young woman should find herself in a position considered compromising by all the most prominent novelists and dramatists she would—

[Jane in passing the vegetable dishes manages to run her dish against Tucker's neck, spilling some of its contents.]

Tucker [leaping to his feet with something like a curse]—Oh! Ho! What the devil are you—

Jane—Oh, sor, an' I'm so terrible sorry. I am that!

Tucker—Sorry? Huh! [Mopping at his neck.]

Jane—But ye see how it is, sor. Indeed I'm not much used to waitin' on the table.

Crane—Tut! Tut! Jane Ellen, it's all right. Don't give it another thought. [Sees Tucker whose face is twisted with anger.] Mr. Tucker has forgotten it already, haven't you, Tucker?

Tucker [angrily]—Oh, yes, yes, of course; I hardly noticed it anyhow. [Tucker sits again.]

Jane—Oh, sor, how kind you are to me. [She runs from the room and is evidently smothering a laugh.]

Lefferts—Yours is a strange but delightful house, Crane.

Crane—You refer, I fancy to the simple peace—the assured confidence that—

Lefferts—That something unexpected is going to happen within the next ten seconds.

[Weeks and Tucker, both absorbed in their private griefs, pay small attention to this talk.]

Crane—Lefferts and I were speaking, Mr. Weeks, of the peculiar atmosphere that makes home what it is.

We should like to hear what you—

[Jane prepares to serve the burlesque.]

Crane [waiting for Jane to fill his glass]—I beg pardon, Mr. Crane, but if you please—just a moment, about that other matter now—

Crane—Let me see, what were we talking of?

Weeks [not seeing Jane Ellen]—It was the question of the propriety of—

Jane—Wine, sor. [In his ear. He greets "Thank you!"]

Lefferts [blinking about]—What a fine old house this is. I'd like to know its history.

Tucker [stiffly, having finally dried his collar]—Well, sir, it belongs, as you perhaps know, to a family named Dainierfield, who held a highly honored place in the history of this country until they unfortunately espoused the wrong side of the civil war. Have you any idea without asking Tucker with whom I here, here, Burton, she omitted me.

Crane—Jane Ellen, you have omitted Mr. Tucker.

Weeks [angrily]—In this part of the country, sir, we are not accustomed to thinking in the wrong side.

Tucker [blinking slightly]—I believe, sir, that I am voting the verdict of history and time.

Crane [lifting his glass]—Gentlemen?

[All raise their glasses and take a sip. Jane puts wine back on sideboard.]

Lefferts [having started on enthusiasm, now is now anxious to turn the talk to safer channels.] Anyhow, the present generation of Dainierfields seems to be an amusing lot. Poverty stricken, though, I understand.

Crane [with a glance at Jane]—Fortunately, or we shouldn't be sitting here to-night.

Weeks—Fortunately?

Crane—I mean for me, of course.

Lefferts—Elliot was talking about them only last night. He says one of the girls is a beauty—now what was her name? Such a pretty one—oh, yes, Olivia.

Jane [from the serving table]—What, sor?

Weeks [terrified at this, Jane serves vegetables again. She lights a taper at candles and lights the spirit lamp on the cigar tray on sideboard.]

Crane—No one spoke to you, Jane Ellen. [He continues to look at her.]

Jane—No, sor.

Lefferts—Elliot said she was a wholesale flirt—engaged to three men at one time last summer.

Weeks [surprised to his feet]—Mr. Lefferts, I'd be obliged to you, sir, if you'd tell Mr. Elliot with my compliments that that's not true. If he doesn't know it, he ought to.

Lefferts—Oh, I'm very sorry.

Weeks—Oh, I don't blame you. You're a stranger here, but I blame him for circulating this groundless gossip about one of the best young ladies in the county.

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Lefferts—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—

Crane—But, Mr. Weeks, if you don't care for him, why not—